

“WHAT IS IT?”

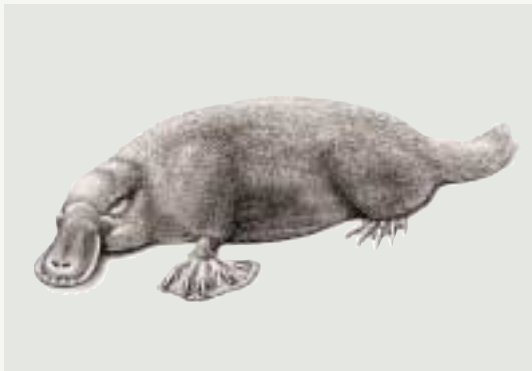


fig 1.1: You know it exists. But how do you describe it?

“The infrastructure of e-business has become a mission critical component of today’s global enterprise,” says The Aberdeen Group.

PUT LESS DELICATELY, an e-business without the right infrastructure is living on borrowed time. The promise of e-business – to cut costs, improve customer service and streamline business models – means nothing if your company’s infrastructure isn’t ready for it.

So what is it? Why do you need it?

Infrastructure is the great invisible enabler. The stuff behind the wall. Servers, software, middleware, routers, storage – the things people never see. It’s end to end. Top to bottom. It’s your e-business skeleton.

Yet most of it wasn’t designed for e-business. And now the Internet’s explosive growth, the sudden connection of every system to every other system, and advances like “always on” wireless devices are testing it in ways designers never imagined. When computers go down, it’s inconvenient. If infrastructure goes down, e-mails bounce, systems crash and customers go elsewhere.

Is it a technical issue? Is it a strategic issue?

The issues of e-business infrastructure: how do I get 20 platforms to work together seamlessly? Can we handle 3 million transactions an hour? Is it more cost effective to connect 30 small servers or consolidate on one massive server? How fast can I deploy?

These are not just technology questions – they’re questions at the heart of how a business is organized and operated. And the answers vary, depending on market conditions, industry type and company size.

IBM is uniquely suited to help business strategists navigate this perilous turf – where a miscue today can cost millions of dollars tomorrow. We understand the

business issues and how technology impacts and shapes them.

Do small companies need to worry about infrastructure?

They do if they want to become big companies. Pity the CEO whose business strategy increases online orders by 500%, but whose infrastructure can’t handle the systemwide chain reaction. IBM infrastructure solutions are flexible and scalable – whether we help you build one from scratch or rent it to you as an outsourced e-business package. Plan for growth or you may pay for the oversight.

What about Linux®?

IBM has committed thousands of developers and technical support experts to Linux for two reasons: choice and interoperability. Never again will you be forced to adapt your processes to the only software available. With Linux, you just adapt the software to suit. Plus, Linux loves all kinds of hardware. Such openness makes it easy for you to integrate disparate platforms and create single, seamless e-business infrastructures.

IBM. The world’s #1 e-business infrastructure company.

We’ve worked with thousands of companies of all sizes in every industry to plan, design and build the infrastructure they’ll need to be successful e-businesses. We’re always working to make it even easier. For a copy of our latest white paper, call us at 800 426 7080 (ask for infrastructure) or visit us at ibm.com/e-business



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